

1.941  
R8Em7  
no.2  
cop.1

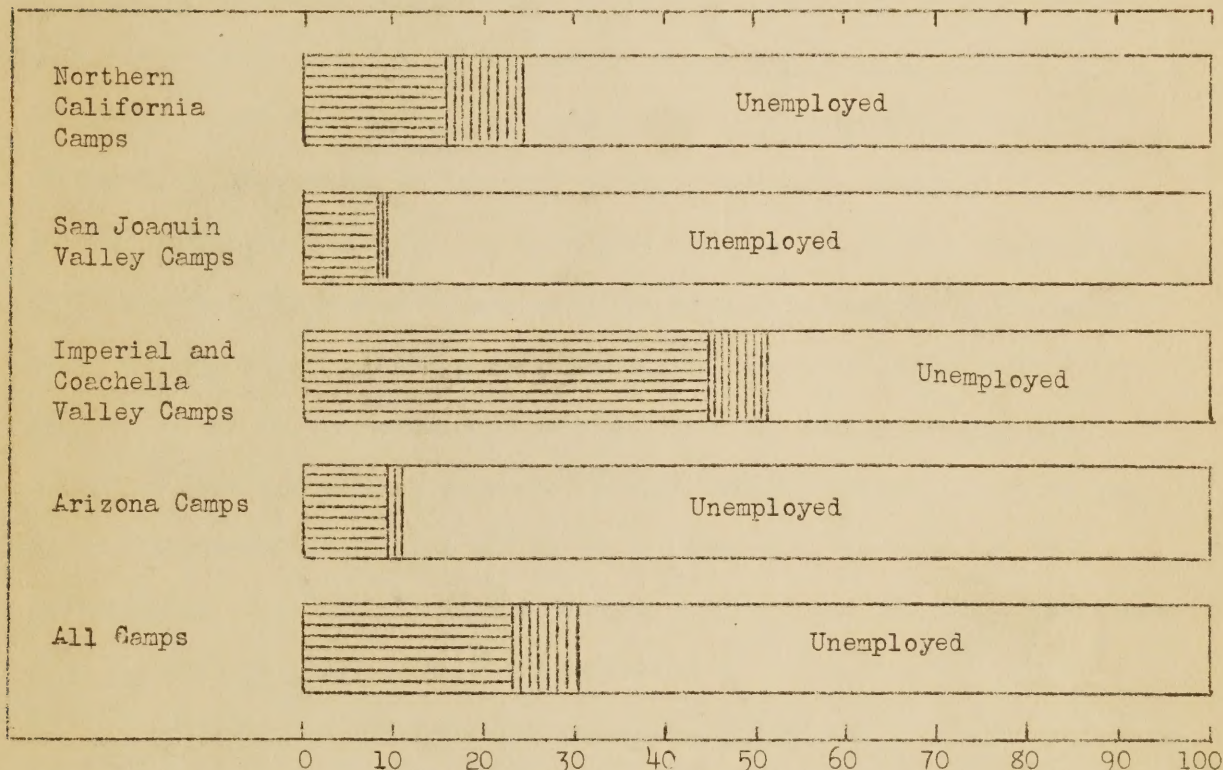
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS LIBRARY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Bureau of Agricultural Economics  
and  
Farm Security Administration

40.2

Employment, Wages and Earnings of Agricultural Workers Living in  
Farm Security Administration Migratory Labor Camps in  
California and Arizona  
March, 1940



During the four weeks ending March 23, an average of 28 per cent of all workers were employed each week--23 per cent on regular employment and 5 per cent on public assistance projects. An average of 72 per cent were unemployed each week.

\*\*\*\*\*

(This is the second of a series of reports to be issued monthly on the employment situation of agricultural workers living in F. S. A. migratory labor camps. The data for these reports are supplied from a ten per cent sample of all families in camps--a new sample being selected every week. All members of each household who are working or seeking work are reported upon with regard to their employment activities during the week in which the family is included in the sample).

Berkeley, California. April 27, 1940.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Bureau of Agricultural Economics  
and  
Farm Security Administration

Employment and Earnings of Farm Workers Residing in Farm Security  
Administration Migratory Labor Camps in California and Arizona  
March, 1940

FARM EMPLOYMENT STILL AT LOW LEVEL

Farm employment in California and Arizona continued through March at a level which is not much improved over the low level of January. According to the monthly reports of the Agricultural Marketing Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture there were approximately 12 workers available for every ten farm jobs in these two States in January of this year. The situation was slightly but not materially improved by April 1. The excess of labor resulted mainly from slow demand rather than from increases in the numbers of workers. For the nation as a whole, supply of farm labor is in excess of demand, but the excess is not as great as in the case of California and Arizona. Moreover, the national farm ~~employ~~ment picture has improved much more rapidly since the first of January than has that in Arizona and California.

Turning to the employment of workers residing within the FSA migratory labor camps, our weekly sample studies based on ten percent of the resident families reflects a much more serious situation than is shown for all farm workers by the Agricultural Marketing Service. During each of the four weeks ending March 23, 1940\* as an average only 23 per cent of the workers in the camps were able to secure employment. An additional 5 per cent were

---

\* On account of certain problems arising in the reporting of employment, no summary was issued for the four-week period between January 27th and February 24th.



occupied, on the average, on public assistance projects (WPA, NYA, and FSA work orders). This leaves an average of 72 per cent who were unemployed during each of the weeks. The proportions of employment vary considerably among areas, and this will be discussed at a later point.

Those employed on other than public assistance projects received an average of about 3 days employment (See Table 1). Since the average earnings, similarly determined, were only \$5.26 per week, it is evident that the average earning per day of employment was less than \$2.00.

The average earnings per family for all families (including the unemployed) from other than public assistance projects was \$2.47 per week (See Table 2). Additional earnings amounting to an average of 77 cents from public assistance projects raise the total earnings for all families to an average of \$3.24 per week for the four-week period.

The employment index has risen from an average of 6.6 in January to 12.0 for March. This indicates both that more workers obtained jobs during March and also that the amount of employment obtained by those working has increased.

The average distance traveled to jobs during March was slightly less than during January. Nevertheless, since the average remains at approximately 10 miles, it is evident that FSA camp occupants are required to travel considerable distances to secure the meager employment which they receive.

#### EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS BY REGIONS

Northern California Camps (Windsor, Gridley, Yuba City, Winters, Thornton).-- Camps in this region report very little agricultural employment. Principal jobs were in wood cutting, cleaning out brush and



pulling woods, levee patrol, and construction. High wages in the two latter types of jobs tend to raise the average earnings.

San Joaquin Valley Camps (Westley, Visalia\*, Shafter, Arvin\*, Corcoran).--

Mobile Unit No. 2 at Corcoran reports 100 per cent unemployment throughout the four-week period. Employment conditions around Westley were relatively favorable during the early part of the month, with principal employment in spinach cutting. At Shafter, employment improved during the latter part of the month but was still at an unfavorable level. As is evident from Table 3, San Joaquin Valley camps reported the lowest level of employment activity of any of the regions.

Imperial and Coachella Valley Camps (Indio, Calipatria, Brawley, Holtville).--

Families in the Indio camp were able to secure considerable employment during the latter part of the month in grapefruit picking, truck crops and irrigating. Pea picking was the principal employment at Calipatria and Brawley. Many families were able to get work but for only 2 or 3 days during the week. Brawley families were able to pick up some miscellaneous odd jobs. At Holtville the situation was similar to Calipatria except that the 2 or 3 days work there per week was principally in the carrots.

Arizona Camps (Agua Fria).-- Reports were received for only the first two weeks. These reports indicate that employment has fallen off considerably since earlier in the year. Only miscellaneous jobs were reported for the first two weeks.

---

\* The reports from these two camps appeared to be inaccurate, therefore they were excluded from the summary for this period.



Table 1.

SUMMARY OF WEEKLY EMPLOYMENT  
Agricultural Workers Living in FSA Migratory  
Labor Camps in California and Arizona  
March, 1940

	Week ending						Four week average
	March 2	March 9	March 16	March 23	March 30	March 31	
1. Percentage of workers receiving employment:							
(a) Employment other than public assistance	19	25	21	28			23
(b) Public work programs	4	2	8	4			5
2. Percentage of families with at least one worker employed:							
(a) Employment other than public assistance	26	33	28	31			30
(b) Public work programs	6	4	16	7			8
3. Average workers per family:							
(a) Employed on other than public assistance	.40	.55	.42	.51			.47
(b) Employed on public assistance	.03	.05	.17	.08			.09
(c) Unemployed	1.57	1.63	1.41	1.31			1.49
(d) Total workers	2.05	2.23	2.00	1.90			2.05
4. Average days employment (other than on public assist.)							
(a) Employed workers	2.74	3.18	3.21	3.42			3.15
(b) All workers	.53	.78	.68	.91			.72
5. Employment index*							
	8.8	13.0	11.3	15.2			12.0
6. Average distance (in miles) from camp to job (public assistance projects excluded)							
	9.8	10.6	7.5	11.8			9.8
(Camps included in above figures)	(11)	(11)	(12)	(11)			-
(Families included in above figures)	(164)	(162)	(154)	(153)			(633)

\* Man days employment received on other than public assistance projects ÷ man days available for employment (allowing for a six-day week). If all workers were fully employed the index number would be 100.



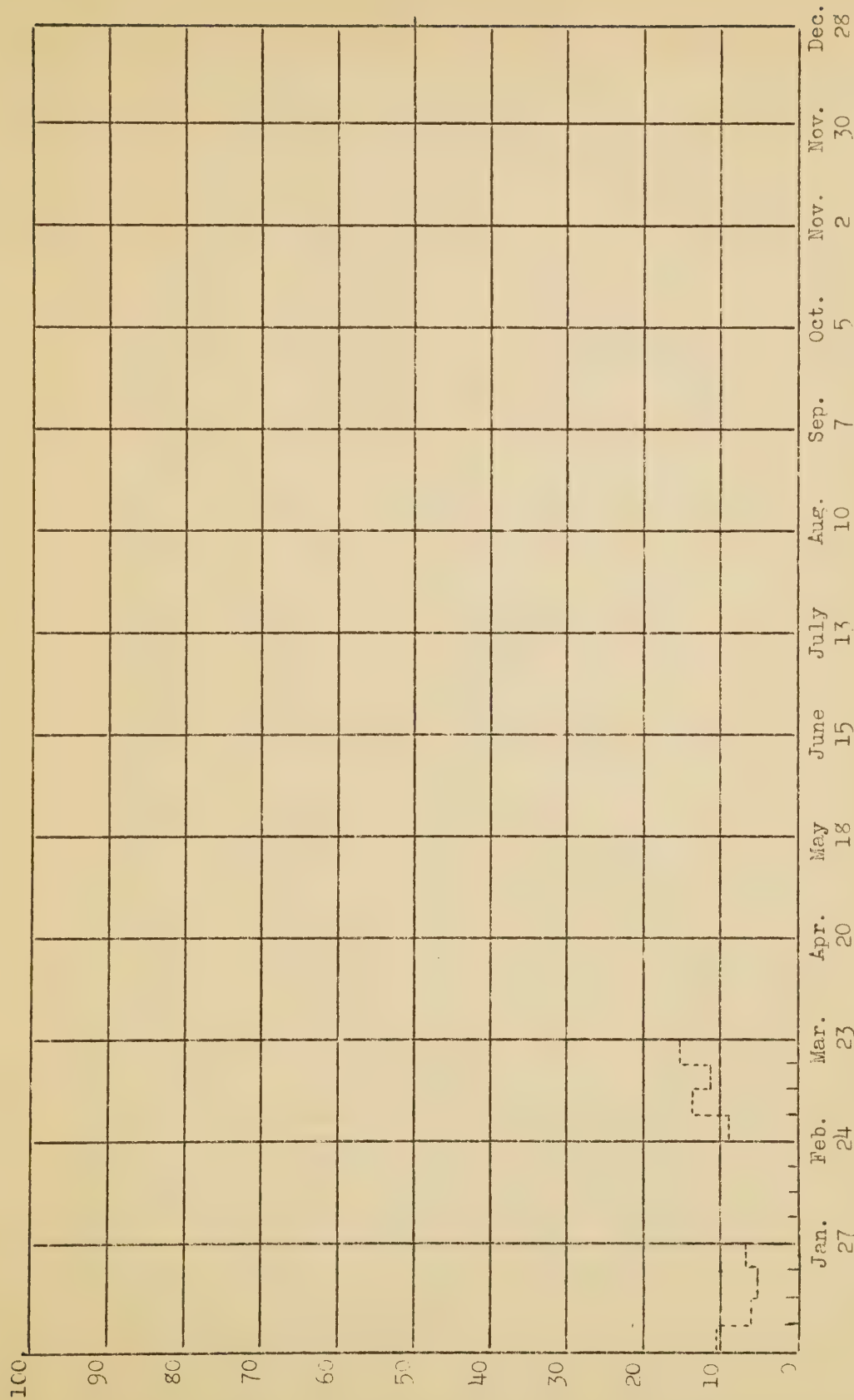
Table 2.

SUMMARY OF WEEKLY EARNINGS  
Agricultural Workers Living in FSA Migratory  
Labor Camps in California and Arizona  
March, 1940

	Week ending				
	March 2	March 9	March 16	March 23	Four week average
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
1. Average earnings from other than public assistance projects:					
(a) Per worker employed	3.45	5.62	6.05	5.69	5.26
(b) Per worker: all workers	.67	1.39	1.28	1.54	1.21
2. Average earnings from public assistance projects:					
(a) Per worker engaged	6.07	9.00	6.81	13.08	8.18
3. Average family earnings: all families					
(a) Employment other than public assistance	1.37	3.09	2.55	2.90	2.47
(b) Employment on public assistance projects	.52	.44	1.15	1.03	.77
(c) Total	1.89	3.53	3.70	3.93	3.24
(Camps included in above figures)	(11)	(11)	(12)	(11)	-
(Families included in above figures)	(164)	(162)	(154)	(153)	(633)



WEEKLY EMPLOYMENT INDEX\* FOR CALIFORNIA  
Farm Workers Living in Farm Security Administration Migratory Labor Camps.  
1940



\* The employment index is determined as follows: Aggregate man-days employment on other than public assistance projects for the week is divided by the aggregate man-days available for employment (employed plus unemployed), allowing for a six-day week.



Table 3

WEEKLY EMPLOYMENT BY REGIONS  
Agricultural Workers Living in FSA Migratory Labor Camps  
in California and Arizona  
March, 1940

		Week ending				
		March	March	March	March	Four week
		2	9	16	23	average
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CAMPS						
1.	Per Cent of Workers Employed:					
	(a) On other than public assistance projects					
	(b) On public assistance projects	7	22	11	22	16
2.	Per Cent of Families with at least one worker employed*	8	5	13	3	8
3.	Average Earnings: all families	12	36	18	26	23
	(a) On other than public assistance projects					
	(b) On public assistance projects	\$ 0.62	\$ 5.07	\$ 2.57	\$ 4.32	\$ 3.29
	(c) All employment ( (a) + (b) )	\$ 0.92	\$ 1.29	\$ 0.90	\$ 0.68	\$ 0.90
4.	Average miles from camp to job*	\$ 1.54	\$ 6.36	\$ 3.47	\$ 5.00	\$ 4.19
5.	(Number of camps included in above calculations)	10.8	8.0	8.6	4.8	7.0
6.	(Number of families included in above calculations)	(3)	(3)	(5)	(5)	-
		(26)	(28)	(49)	(53)	(156)
SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CAMPS						
1.	Per Cent of Workers Employed:					
	(a) On other than public assistance projects					
	(b) On public assistance projects	11	6	10	5	8
2.	Per Cent of Families with at least one worker employed*	2	-	1	-	1
3.	Average Earnings: all families	16	12	19	11	14
	(a) On other than public assistance projects					
	(b) On public assistance projects	\$ 0.16	\$ 1.30	\$ 2.31	\$ 1.05	\$ 1.23
	(c) All employment ( (a) + (b) )	\$ 0.56	\$ -	\$ 0.21	\$ -	\$ 0.18
4.	Average miles from camp to job*	\$ 0.72	\$ 1.30	\$ 2.52	\$ 1.05	\$ 1.41
5.	(Number of camps included in above calculations)	16.0	7.1	7.6	6.3	9.9
6.	(Number of families included in above calculations)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	-
		(43)	(43)	(48)	(55)	(189)

\*Public assistance projects excluded.



Table 3 (Contd.)

WEEKLY EMPLOYMENT BY REGIONS  
Agricultural Workers Living in FSA Migratory Labor Camps  
in California and Arizona  
March, 1940

	Week ending				
	March	March	March	March	Four week
	2	9	16	23	average
IMPERIAL AND COACHELLA VALLEY CAMPS					
1. Per Cent of Workers Employed:					
(a) On other than public assistance projects	37	45	42	61	45
(b) On public assistance projects	4	3	11	11	7
2. Per Cent of Families with at least one worker employed*	43	47	44	62	48
3. Average Earnings: all families					
(a) On other than public assistance projects	\$ 2.74	\$ 3.51	\$ 2.74	\$ 3.49	\$ 3.10
(b) On public assistance projects	\$ 0.26	\$ 0.51	\$ 2.16	\$ 2.69	\$ 1.24
(c) All employment ( (a) + (b) )	\$ 3.00	\$ 4.02	\$ 4.90	\$ 6.18	\$ 4.34
4. Average miles from camp to job*	11.4	10.4	11.7	8.7	10.5
5. (Number of camps included in above calculations)	(4)	(4)	(4)	(3)	-
6. (Number of families included in above calculations)	(68)	(70)	(57)	(45)	(240)
ARIZONA CAMPS					
1. Per Cent of Workers Employed:					
(a) On other than public assistance projects	7	11			9
(b) On public assistance projects	4	-			2
2. Per Cent of Families with at least one worker employed*	15	24			18
3. Average Earnings: all families					
(a) On other than public assistance projects	\$ 0.56	\$ 2.67			\$ 1.48
(b) On public assistance projects	\$ 0.70	\$ -			\$ 0.40
(c) All employment ( (a) + (b) )	\$ 1.26	\$ 2.67			\$ 1.88
4. Average miles from camp to job*	7.0	9.8			8.7
5. (Number of camps included in above calculations)	(1)	(1)			-
6. (Number of families included in above calculations)	(27)	(21)			(48)

\* Public assistance projects excluded.



LOCATION OF THE FARM  
SECURITY ADMINISTRATION  
MIGRATORY LABOR CAMPS  
IN CALIFORNIA

Northern California

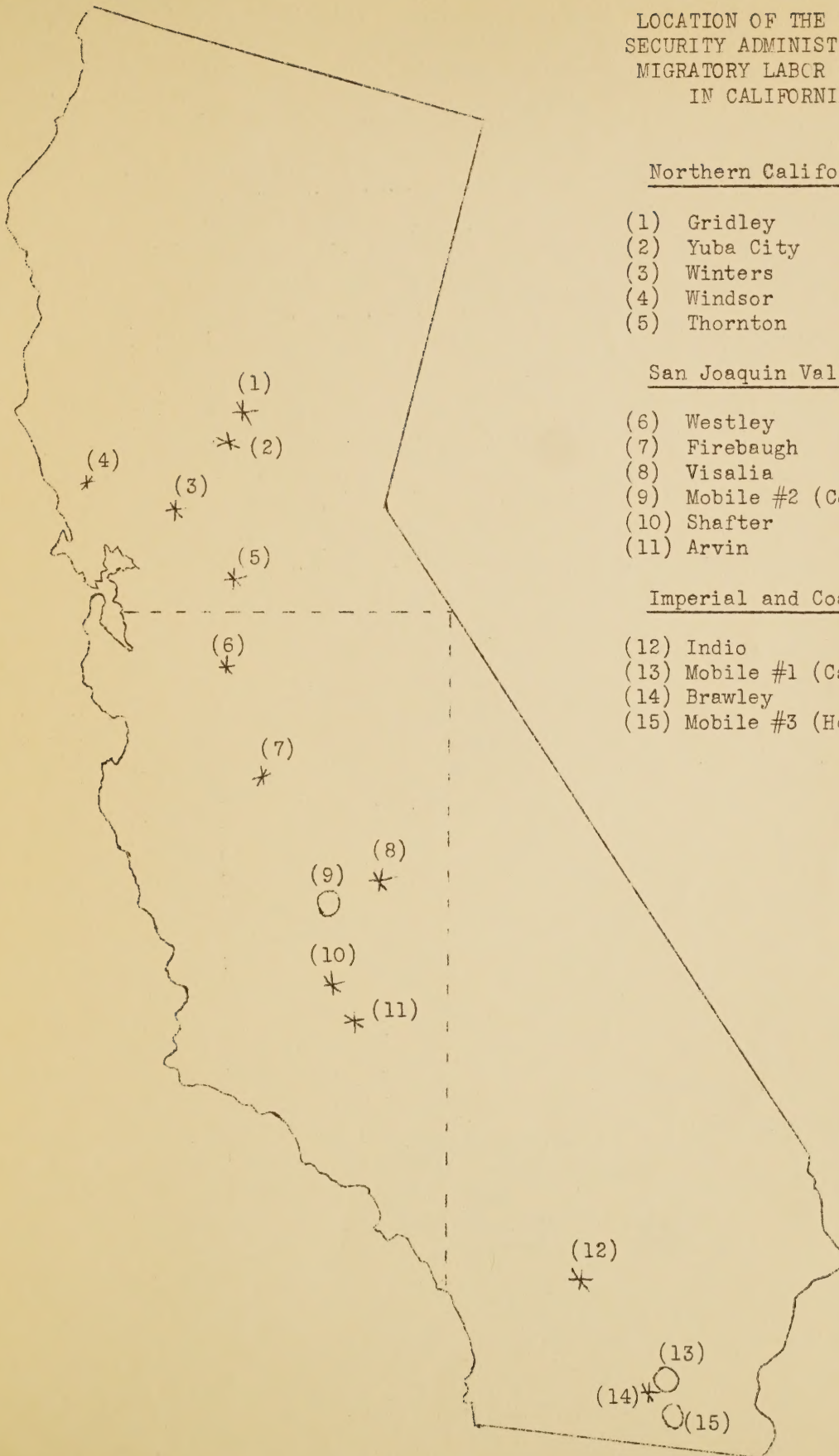
- (1) Gridley
- (2) Yuba City
- (3) Winters
- (4) Windsor
- (5) Thornton

San Joaquin Valley

- (6) Westley
- (7) Firebaugh
- (8) Visalia
- (9) Mobile #2 (Corcoran)
- (10) Shafter
- (11) Arvin

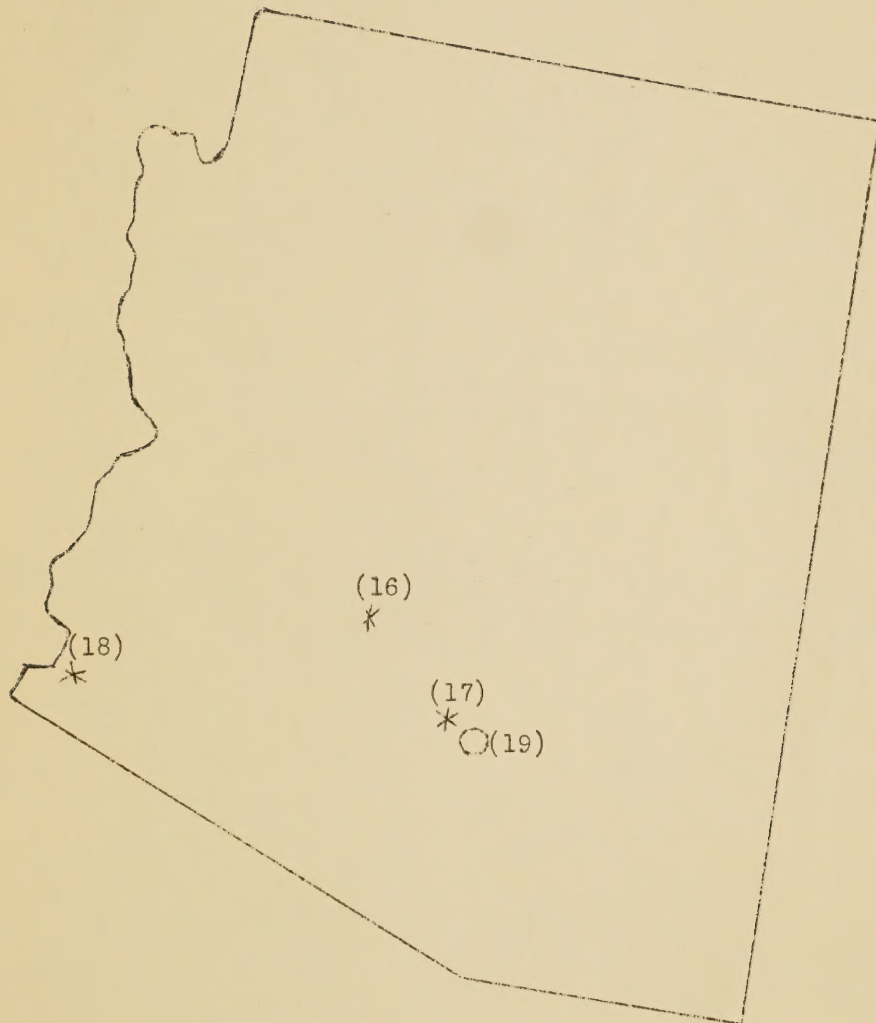
Imperial and Coachella Valleys

- (12) Indio
- (13) Mobile #1 (Calipatria)
- (14) Brawley
- (15) Mobile #3 (Holtville)





LOCATION OF THE  
FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION  
MIGRATORY LABOR CAMPS  
IN ARIZONA



- (16) Agua Fria
- (17) 11-Mile Corners
- (18) Yuma
- (19) Eloy (Mobile Camp in  
storage, not operating)

